



## **Buckle Up America Talking Points**

**GOAL/POSITIONING:** Seat belts are the most effective safety feature available in vehicles today; still, nearly one in five Americans fail to regularly wear seat belts when driving or riding in a vehicle no matter what time of day. *Buckle Up America* encourages occupants to always wear seat belts and restraints. Employing safe driving practices day and night is the key to keeping drivers, their passengers, and other motorists on our Nation's highways safe. A seat belt can mean the difference between life and death. The goal of NHTSA's creative materials is to ultimately get more drivers and passengers to buckle up on every trip, every time.

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### **KEY MESSAGES:**

#### **❖ Seat belts save lives – they are the best defense against injuries and fatalities**

- In 2009, among passenger vehicle occupants 5 and older, seat belts saved an estimated 12,713 lives. If all passenger vehicle occupants 5 and older had worn seat belts, 16,401 lives (that is, an additional 3,688) could have been saved in 2009.
- In 2010, the seat belt use rate was 85 percent compared to 58 percent in 1994.
- Seat belts, when used, reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants by 45 percent.
- From 1975 through 2009, an estimated 9,310 children's lives were saved by child restraints.

#### **❖ Reasons to Buckle**

- Seat belts remain the most effective safety feature available in vehicles today. They have been standard equipment in every new car sold in the United States since 1968. There is no excuse – *Buckle Up America*.
- Every State except New Hampshire has laws requiring the use of seat belts.
- It only takes a second to get into a crash. A seat belt can mean the difference between life, death, or serious injury.
- Being thrown from the vehicle can leave you injured or killed.
- Each individual can make a difference – it's about personal responsibility.
- Unbelted occupants could end up paying physically, financially, morally, and socially.